that the guardians might adopt the regulation the Act of 1882 with regard to tramps without adding accommodation to their present buildings.

Mr. T. Salt's resolution hits the right nail on the head. You must secure the children of the tramp, be he bad—or good, in my opinion—for otherwise these children will grow up rolling stones. In higher circles of society tramping is called Bohemianism; but, call it by what name you will, it is far too fascinating to be given up when once acquired. Stop, therefore, the young from even getting a taste for it.—I am, etc.,

Hastings, Nov. 23rd. CHAS. ORTON.

CONGENITAL WORD BLINDNESS.

SIR,—Dr. Hinshelwood, in commenting on my case of congenital word blindness, raises a question of great interest, namely, was the patient able to recognise at sight musical notes? In my examination of him the point was not lost sight of, but unfortunately he had never been taught music, so I am unable to supply any information upon that point. I should here like to suggest the possible value of phonography or shorthand in the treatment of this condition. As the patient had little or no difficulty in reading and understanding the value of algebraic signs, it is possible that phonetic symbols might present equally little difficulty to him.—I am, etc.,

Seaford, Nov. 23rd. W. PRINGLE MORGAN, M.B.

OBITUARY.

SIR BENJAMIN WARD RICHARDSON, KT., M.D., F.R.S., F.R.C.P.

WHEN in June, 1893, Dr. Richardson received the honour of knighthood, we spoke of him as one who had done much to impress upon the general public the value of the work which medicine and sanitary science is doing for the public good. Since then he has continued his good work, and hence it is with regret that the profession heard of his death last Saturday morning. With his strong constitution and well-known abstemious habits, it was hoped that he would live to a green old age, preserving his faculties to the last, the more so since his peculiar talents were of a kind that can be exercised in age, and are only quenched by senility. Unfortunately the self-imposed labours in which he continued, owing to his zeal for his cause, ended by exhausting him, degeneration of the cerebral arteries developed, and his health began to fail a few years since. Exactly a fortnight ago he presided at a temperance lecture given by Dr. Joseph Lees at Sion College, Victoria Embankment, and spoke, but seemed very weak. On the 18th he attended a meeting of the directors of a company in the City, and in the evening concluded the correction of the proofs of an autobiography which is shortly to appear. After dinner he was found sitting unconscious in a chair from an apoplectic seizure. Sir Alfred Garrod was called in, but at a consultation it was agreed that the patient was sinking hopelessly. Consciousness was never regained, and death occurred early on the morning of the 21st, at the patient's residence, Manchester Square, where the fatal seizure occurred.

Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson was one of those happy men who know how to blend their tastes with their interests, and how to show the public that they possess that knowledge. In the medical profession this task is especially difficult, as people have an idea that a doctor should do nothing but doctoring, and that if he goes about lecturing and takes up a cause he has probably little or no practice. Yet some medical men succeed in increasing confidence by taking up causes, and Sir Benjamin stands pre-eminent in this respect. He earned his bread yet actively supported, not his cause, but his causes, for he took up several public questions. He lived and died a physician in practice, yet known to the world at large as a great temperance man, an advocate of athletics, especially cycling, and a projector of an ideal sanitary town. To the profession he was further known as a authority on anæsthetics and artificial respiration, as an inventor of apparatus for the painless extinction of animals, and as a man deeply learned in medical literature, the writer as well as the editor of a medical serial. In intellectual and leisured circles he was also known as a man of brilliant social qualities, a first-class after-dinner speaker, who proved that alcohol is not essential to post-prandial eloquence. Yet at the same time all still remember him as a physician.

Benjamin Ward Richardson was born at Sowerby in Leicestershire exactly 68 years ago. After private education in his native county, he was apprenticed to Mr. Henry Hudson, a surgeon in Sowerby. In 1847 he assisted Mr. Thomas Brown in a practice at Saffron-Walden, where Dr. Edwin Lankester and Dr. Forbes Winslow had preceded him. After assisting in practice in other parts of the country, during which period he invented a chloroform inhaler, he joined the late Dr. Willis, of Barnes, in 1849. He then resided at Mortlake, and for a time worked with Dr. Henry, our late Sub-Editor; but just as the latter soon devoted himself to literature, Dr. Richardson soon came to town.

In 1850 he qualified at Glasgow. In 1854, after doing much journalistic work, he joined the Medical Society, and won the Fothergillian gold medal during the same year, when he also took his degree at St. Andrews. Whilst studying hard he became known amongst literary circles and wits, and joined "Our Club," where he made the acquaintance of Thackeray, Cruickshank, Douglas Jerrold, Hepworth Dixon, Dr. Doran, and others who have long passed away.

His activity remained unabated from those days to his death. He wrote on coagulation of the blood, winning the Astley Cooper prize in 1856, and soon became an authority on anæsthetics, artificial respiration, and the painless extinction of animals. Public health was another of his favourite subjects, and in 1862 he started the *Social Science Review*. At the same time he worked at the action of drugs, especially nitrite of amyl. He wrote also three plays and some poems. His researches into the carbon compounds led first to closer investigations on the effects of alcohol, and later to his strong advocacy of temperance, which is known to all who know his name. His Cantor Lectures on alcohol, delivered at the Society of Arts in 1874, first made him known as a scientific advocate of abstinence. He showed that alcohol caused the temperature to rise, not to fall, and increased instead of diminishing tissue waste. Next year he projected the Utopian City of Hygeia at the Brighton meeting of the Social Science Congress.

Two subjects are associated with the later years of his career—his advocacy of cycling, in which he set a good example to the youth and manhood of big cities; and the issue of the *Asclepiad*, a journal written as well as edited by himself. It began in 1861 as *Clinical Essays: The Asclepiad*, but was soon discontinued. After years of further experience in editorial and literary work he brought out his self-written serial under the simpler name of the *Asclepiad*, and it has continued till his death. It is a remarkable collection of clinical, scientific, biographical, and medico-historical work, and is of considerable value for reference. A year ago he showed in an article in his paper that he had already demonstrated the transmission of light through animal bodies at the Norwich meeting of the British Association, in 1868. Sir Benjamin stated in his communication at the meeting that he did not consider his method to be perfect, "but thought that it promised results of the greatest interest and value."

Sir Benjamin W. Richardson married, in 1857, Miss M. Smith, of Mortlake, an accomplished pianist, and a pupil of Sir Sterndale Bennett, and they had two sons and one daughter. The widow, daughter, and sons survive; one of the latter is a lawyer, and the other is known in artistic circles.

PATRICK FRASER, M.D. ST. AND., L.R.C.S.ED.

DR. FRASER died at his house, Stoke Lodge, Stoke D'Abernon, on November 12th. He was born at Liberton, in Lanarkshire, N.B., on March 5th, 1805. His father was minister of that parish, and he was the youngest of six sons. Dr. Fraser studied in Edinburgh, and went to Dublin to learn anatomy. He became a Licentiate of the Edinburgh College of Surgeons in 1828, and then went to Heidelberg and Paris. In 1829 he went as Assistant-Surgeon in one of the Honourable East India Company's ships, which brought tea from China to London, and which alone at that time could bring tea. He made two